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ABSTRACT

In spring 1983, the Center for the Study of Community Colleges (CSCC) surveyed a random sample of 403 instructors teaching academic courses in community college districts in Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Miami-Dade, and St. Louis in order to discover the experiences and aspirations of people teaching the humanities, sciences, social sciences, and arts. Study findings, based on responses from 403 instructors, included the following: (1) most respondents fell into the 41 to 50 years age span (37%); (2) 228 instructors had previously taught in high schools, and of these, 33% did so for 5 to 10 years; (3) 48% of the respondents had worked at their current college for 11 to 20 years; (4) 69% of the sample were males; (5) Chicago had the most full-time instructors (78%), while Dallas had the most part-time instructors; (6) 71% of the respondents held a master's degree, and 27% held a doctorate; (7) with respect to professional involvement, 26% of the group had received a formal award for outstanding teaching, 19% had authored or co-authored a book, 36% had published a journal article, 33% had taught interdisciplinary courses, 45% had taught occupational students, and 51% had promoted their own courses; and (8) when asked about their 5-year career aspirations, 24% felt a position at a four-year college to be desirable, 9% wanted an administrator position, and 59% wanted to be doing what they were currently doing. The study summary includes comparisons among the districts. (AYC)

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Liberal Arts Instructors: Demographics and Professional Orientations

What are the experiences and aspirations of people teaching the humanities, sciences, social sciences, and arts in six large community college districts? What are their professional involvements? Their special interests?

In Spring 1983, the Center for the Study of Community Colleges surveyed* a random sample of 403 instructors teaching academic courses in Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, Maricopa, Miami-Dade, and St. Louis.** Many similarities appear among this sample, perhaps because all of the instructors teach academic subjects. In fact, these similarities are almost pervasive, both inter-and-intra-institutionally. On the other hand, some interesting differences do prevail. This issue of the **BULLETIN** addresses results of this survey, and answers questions relating to faculty in the different institutions—their demographic characteristics, special activities and awards, and professional expectations.

* The survey instrument was developed under Grant Number OP-20046-82 from the National Endowment for the Humanities.
** The six district project was funded by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The total of 403 respondents was as follows: Chicago, 72; Dallas, 70; Los Angeles, 113; Maricopa, 59; Miami-Dade, 37; and St. Louis, 29.

Demographics

The instructors' ages and the number of years they had taught showed some district variation. Most respondents fell into the 41-50 years age span, with Maricopa having the highest percent here (44%). However, Los Angeles claimed more instructors in the 51-60 years and 61 and over time slots, and Dallas had most (40%) who were 31-40 years old (Table 1).

When asked about the number of years taught in high school, any college, or their current institution, respondents varied considerably among districts. For example, while in all districts most instructors who had taught in high school centered primarily about the 5-10 year time slot, Los Angeles had 23% who indicated 11-20 years and Miami-Dade, 21%. Very few of the respondents had spent over 20 years as a high school teacher.

The 11-20 year time period was also greatest for respondents teaching at any college or their current college. Chicago, however, had 28% who indicated over 20 years at any college, and Los Angeles, 20% who noted that they had spent over 20 years in one of the Los Angles Community Colleges. Except for the City Colleges of Chicago, which had the oldest college

Table 1
AGE IN 1983

	Total	Chicago	Dallas	Los Angeles	Maricopa	Miami-Dade	St. Louis
Under 30 years	3%	1%	7%	2%	0%	8%	7%
31-40 years	**25**	**13**	**40**	**19**	**24**	**32**	**34**
41-50 years	37	42	37	37	44	42	35
51-60 years	**23**	**31**	**13**	**28**	**26**	**14**	**10**
Over 60 years	12	14	3	20	7	5	14

Table 2
YEARS TAUGHT IN HIGH SCHOOL*

	Total	Chicago	Dallas	Los Angeles	Maricopa	Miami-Dade	St. Louis
One Year	11%	13%	3%	13%	21%	7%	8%
1-2 years	16	21	31	16	3	7	8
3-4 years	15	17	17	11	18	21	8
5-10 years	33	38	23	30	36	43	50
11-20 years	18	13	17	23	12	21	17
Over 20	7	0	9	7	9	0	8
AT ANY COLLEGE							
One Year	2%	2%	2%	2%	5%	0%	0%
1-2 years	8	7	18	4	11	5	9
3-4 years	9	9	7	13	7	5	4
5-10 years	20	15	22	24	9	38	17
11-20 years	44	39	46	41	48	33	65
Over 60	16	28	7	16	21	19	4
AT THIS COLLEGE							
One Year	4%	3%	5%	3%	8%	9%	4%
1-2 years	5	3	8	4	4	5	4
3-4 years	8	5	9	8	6	14	15
5-10 years	24	10	44	24	32	29	4
11-20 years	48	64	35	46	43	40	73
Over 20	11	15	0	20	8	6	0

*The figures reported here are based on the 228 people in the entire sample who responded to this item. This implies that the 57% who did not respond had not taught in high school.

(Malcolm X, originally called Crane College, founded in 1911) and which has 70% of its respondents teaching in their current institution 11 years and over, no correlation appears between the age of the colleges and the years of teaching experience in them. For example, Phoenix College in the Maricopa district is the next oldest, founded in 1920: 51% of the respondents designated the eleven years and over time slot. Table 2 presents these data.

Other demographic information shows that of the total sample, 69% were males. Los Angeles had most males (73%) and Chicago, most females (55%). Only slight variations pertained to racial backgrounds, Chicago and St. Louis claiming more Black/Afro-Americans and Miami-Dade, more Hispanics other than Chicanos.

With an average for all six districts of 78%, Chicago had the most full-timers (94%) and Dallas, the most part-timers (37%). The masters degree was held by 71% and the doctorate by 27% of the total sample. St. Louis claimed the most instructors holding masters degrees while Maricopa and Miami-Dade each had 32% with the doctorate. Chicago had 19% so responding; Dallas, 16%; Los Angeles, 14%, Maricopa 9%; Miami-Dade, 25%; and St. Louis, 17%.

Table 3
SPECIAL ACTIVITIES OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS

	Total	Chicago	Dallas	Los Angeles	Maricopa	Miami-Dade	St. Louis
Gone off campus to attend a conference or symposium related to teaching	74%	63%	76%	71%	85%	68%	93%
Received an instructional development grant from the college	10	2	16	5	25	15	0
Received released time to work on curriculum or instruction	13	3	16	9	9	42	19
Received in-service credit toward augmented salary	11	22	3	9	9	23	8
Received college funds for travel	35	6	49	25	45	46	79
Received a paid sabbatical	8	0	2	11	13	15	11

Professional Involvement

How a college operates may be reflected in its faculty. And how the faculty see their professional roles may be reflected in the college's direction on particular events, activities, and the emphasis it places on such functions as, for example, the liberal arts and transfer education. A college with a vital community service component and instructors interested in the performing arts may offer more musical and art events than a college that is not so involved. Or, colleges with active proposal writers and experts in instruction may produce greater curriculum changes than a college whose faculty are not so engaged.

The CSCC instructors' survey asked questions about professional experiences and involvements of its respondents. One item directed to special professional activities over the pervious three years provided interesting findings, as shown in Table 3.

Of the three districts, Chicago is lowest in all items other than "Received in-service credit toward augmented salary." This finding may be explained by the fact that in Chicago's agreement with the union, 12 hours per week of teaching was demanded in exchange for fringe benefits, such as sabbaticals and travel funds. Where districts do not have these bargaining agreements, the special activities granted to an instructor may be greater.

Going off campus to attend a teaching-related activity was by and large the most popular activity in all districts. When college funds are used for such an activity, and traveling to another district is necessary, however, the participation is generally decreased. Here the variation among districts is considerable. With an average score of 35% for all districts, Chicago showed a 6% participation rate and St. Louis, 79%. Miami-Dade provides opportunities for released time to work on curriculum and instruction as well as travel funds, due in part to the fact that Florida has funds available for staff and program development. Miami-Dade's high of 15% for sabbatical leaves (as compared with a mean of 8%), is in part also due to this same state-wide concern and support for professional development.

The extent to which a faculty participates in professional organizations – by becoming members, presenting papers, and attending conferences – is another indicator of involvement. Affiliation with professional organizations in the past three years varied only slightly among the districts. With an average of 61%, more respondents from Los Angeles (82%) and fewer from

Table 4
PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES AND ACTIVITIES

	Total	Chicago	Dallas	Los Angeles	Maricopa	Miami-Dade	St. Louis
Received a formal award for outstanding teaching	26%	18%	32%	29%	19%	30%	29%
Authored or co-authored a published book	19	17	26	18	20	11	14
Had an article published in a journal in your field	36	30	33	37	40	39	35
Taught courses jointly with faculty members outside your department	33	17	38	34	35	37	43
Taught a portion of your course to students in an occupational program	45	49	49	37	39	53	57
Developed extracurricular humanities activities (e.g., colloquium, exhibits, concerts)	46	41	46	50	33	51	58
Gone to a local high school to recruit students for your academic program	33	27	49	20	42	39	39
Promoted your own classes through presentations or advertisement on campus	51	49	55	56	43	46	50
Applied to an outside agency for a research grant to study a problem in your field	25	30	24	27	18	14	24
Received a stipend or grant from: a private foundation (e.g., Danforth, Ford)	12	13	20	11	5	9	15
• a professional association (e.g., American Historical Association	7	6	6	9	4	9	12
a state or federal government agency (e.g., National Endowment for the Humanities)	29	31	22	34	25	26	35

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Maricopa (32%) were members of state or national faculty organizations – for example, AFT, NEA. Dallas had the highest number (24%) who had attended a regional or national meeting of a professional organization, and Chicago had the most (17%) instructors who had presented papers at these conferences. When it came to affiliation with disciplinary associations (for example, the American Psychological Association, American Historical Association), 79% of the St. Louis respondents indicated involvement. Attending meetings was also highest for St. Louis instructors.

One item that elicited considerable variation had to do with professional experiences of the respondents (Table 4).

Interestingly, the two districts that had colleges founded most recently (St. Louis, 1963 and Dallas, 1970) had the greatest total percent of faculty members who were involved in a number of professional activities. Yet, when it came to individual activities, no particular pattern of involvement evolved.

One measure of faculty satisfaction has to do with aspirations. Instructors who anticipate staying in their current positions five years hence are probably much more content than those who would choose another place of employment. As demonstrated in Table 5, 59% of the 403 respondents would continue to do what they are currently doing – implying satisfaction with their roles as community college-liberal arts instructors. Of the responses for each of the eight options, a greater percent of people from Miami-Dade look to a faculty position at a four-year college or university, an administrative position in a community college, a position at a school outside the United States, or a non-teaching, non-academic position. Dallas has the highest percentage of those who would select a faculty position at another community college, and St. Louis has 12% looking at professional association positions.

Table 5
ATTRACTIVE POSITIONS

Five years from now (1988) you might be considering the following positions. How attractive do they appear to you at this time?

	Total	Chicago	Dallas	Los Angeles	Maricopa	Miami-Dade	St. Louis
A faculty position at a four-year college or university	24%	31%	21%	22%	11%	43%	29%
A faculty position at another community or junior college	14	7	22	5	11	18	11
An administrative position in a community or junior college	9	8	6	9	6	28	8
A position at a school outside the U.S.	14	16	10	10	17	22	13
A position in a professional association	4	8	2	2	4	0	12
Any position but this college	2	3	0	3	0	0	0
A non-teaching-non academic position	9	5	6	10	9	18	8
I would be doing what I am doing now	59	50	54	61	62	46	48

For the nine percent who would select a non-academic position, Table 6 presents a breakdown of responses. Being self employed appears to be the most popular choice for all except the St. Louis respondents, who prefer business corporate jobs.

Maricopa anticipates more retirement (28%) than the other district respondents, even though they are not the oldest in the survey (see Table 1).

In Sum

Responses to this survey by 403 instructors of liberal arts courses in six large community college districts suggest that certain similarities prevail among people teaching academic subjects. At the same time, some differences do occur in the various districts. If administrators want to select people on the basis of particular dimensions-e.g., involvement in the profession – this survey may help sort out characteristics deemed more or less desirable. For example, in some districts, the instructors have assumed more professional involvement, are more settled in career positions, and demand more of students. Similarly, in some districts the faculty are older than in others and, accordingly, will retire earlier. Administrators who are planning for the next decade might consider institutional response to vacancies caused by the growing number of retiring instructors. They may also look to the ways in which instructors stress special activities as they focus on curricular development and pose special directions for their work.

Table 6
IF A NON ACADEMIC POSITION APPEARS ATTRACTIVE, WHAT TYPE OF POSITION MOST APPEALS?

	Total	Chicago	Dallas	Los Angeles	Maricopa	Miami-Dade	St. Louis
Business/Corporate	22%	20%	37%	16%	16%	14%	44%
Government	13	20	12	13	6	9	11
Non-profit organization	10	17	2	10	6	23	11
Self-employed	40	40	42	45	44	36	11
Retired/Not in labor force	16	3	7	17	28	18	22

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